

IDEALIA
A UTOPIA DREAM
OR RESTHAVEN

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The late Mrs. H. Alfarata Chapman Thompson,
Albany, N. Y.

IDEALIA

*A UTOPIA DREAM
OR RESTHAVEN*

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J. WALLACE THOMPSON
ALBANY, N. Y.

COMPOSITION, PRESSWORK, AND BINDING

BY

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IDEALIA, A UTOPIA DREAM OR RESTHAVEN

This interesting and beautiful story, within a few lines of its finish, was written by Miss H. Alfarata Chapman, Stenographer for many years in charge of the catalogue department, University of the State of New York, New York State Library.

Miss Chapman and John W. Thompson were married by Rev. J. Hill Johnson, Rector of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Catskill, N. Y., September 10, 1921.

Miss Helena R. Goines, a life-long friend, was the Maid of Honor. William A. Chapman, brother of the Bride, was best man. The other two friends present were Mrs. John Butler, Mother of the Maid of Honor and Mrs. Clarissa Mims. Mrs. H. Alfarata Chapman Thompson was a brilliant young woman, highly edu-

cated, having graduated with honors from the Albany High School and the Albany Business College, and a gifted and graceful writer. Her demise while visiting her dearly beloved brother in Cambridge, Mass., June 9, 1922, was a sad and dreadful shock to her many friends all over the country. Many of the most intimate friends appealed to me, her husband, to publish the story of the Utopia Dream, which so beautifully brings the portrayal of the characters of those within the Resthaven with characteristic sweetness and grace.

To the many friends who may read this little book should remember *that it is published by request and dedicated to the memory of my devoted Wife, one of the best types of American Womanhood, true to her parents, friends and relatives.*

JOHN W. THOMPSON.

Harriet Alfarata Chapman, wife of John W. Thompson, died at her brother's

home, No. 7 West Street, Cambridge, Mass., June 9, 1922.

Remains reached her late residence, No. 436 Orange Street, June 11th, where the funeral took place at 2:30 o'clock, June 12th. Interment — Rural Cemetery, Albany, N. Y.

Noted educator lauds her as an example of the universally high regard in which she was held. Melvil Dewey, one of the State's leading educators and President of the Lake Placid Club, sent the following to the bereaved husband:

"June 22, 1922.

J. W. THOMPSON:—

Albany, N. Y.

DEAR MR. THOMPSON:—

I have learned with keen regret of your great loss. Your wife was one of the best stenographers, most loyal assistants, I have ever had. I have said hundreds of times that Harriet Chapman was rarely equalled. Pray accept

my sincere sympathy in your loss and this testimony which I am so glad to bear to a woman of unusual ability and character, who always commanded my utmost respect and confidence.

MELVIL DEWEY."

PREFACE

THE writer in sending out this little book asks that its readers will try to bear in mind that while the whole idea may be more or less ideal, it is hoped that here and there a thought may be culled which will serve as a working-basis for one or another of its readers. Often in life we realize that something within us is "knocking to be let out," that it may go forth and be of use unto the world. We frequently need but the direction pointed to find a path along which we can tread, scattering here and there a kindly word, giving of ourselves whatever is best and worthy the giving, in return broadening our own lives, coming in touch with all natures and feeling the satisfaction that results from "having tried to do something." Be the effort ever so small, it yet shows a desire put in action and we can hope that, given a

multitude of these good actions, the result must surely be more sunshine, more hope, more inspiration to help others, greater ability to enjoy all that God has put before us.

The writer could carry out her purpose only by having a setting which is purely ideal, but from the ideal can often be deduced something real or practical, and of that we can use and adapt to ourselves and individual circumstances whatever will fit. In this case, it may be much or it may be little, but let us hope that it will be something, at least, whatever its measure may be. Therefore take from these pages that which appeals to you, then pass on the book to the next that whatever good seeds this little work may contain will in time fall in fruitful soil.

IDEALIA, A UTOPIA DREAM
OR
RESTHAVEN

“ Reflect that life, like every other blessing,

Derives its value from its use alone.”

THE day was ideal for me, an idler who had left the train at the station not far from this particular hamlet, more because it looked attractive, than from actual intention. Strolling leisurely along the shady lanes, it seemed to me that something more than the usual calm and restful peace of the country emanated from somewhere. A little farther on I reached a place where all nature seemed to be rejoicing in her own glory. Even the fence about the grounds surrounding the very large dwelling within its boundary looked attractive in its quaint style and bedecked with the flowering vines which clung lovingly to it.

The grounds were large and well kept. Immense trees spread their branches and shade in all directions, looking cool and inviting with the comfortable chairs, hammocks, tables and garden seats beneath, arranged with seeming carelessness, yet each had apparently been put in the best place for the general comfort and pleasure of any occupant. Beautiful flower beds, many with fountains interspersed, made one linger involuntarily and either drink the crystal water from the numerous bright cups generously provided, or pass the hand gently through the water, enjoying its refreshing coolness and bright sparkle in the sunlight as it dropped from the fingers. What looked like dining-tables on wheels seemed to be standing in convenient places but movable to different locations, to allow the pleasure of eating out of doors, presumably, as long as weather permitted. Truly, the inmates of this enchanting spot must surely have studied how and where best to enjoy life.

Leisurely walking around I wondered that no one seemed visible about the place, especially as it was after two o'clock in the afternoon of a summer's day. Reaching the house and feeling free to view it on all sides, as no one appeared to prevent, I proceeded to examine it with the idea of determining what sort of people lived here. On every side there were large windows, and piazzas with tables, wicker rockers, sofas and easy chairs. Here, too, with careful forethought, shading vines in not too great profusion were trained on the sunny side of the house, making inviting retreats from the sun, yet with occasional open spaces for any preferring its full bright rays. Though an uninvited guest, I took the liberty of picking out a comfortable corner, and feeling somewhat tired from the long walk thought I would rest for an hour or two, having no fear of being molested in such a peaceful place. It was then nearly three.

Surely my intended short nap must have stretched itself into hours, for on awakening I saw people in every direction, young, old and middle aged, but seemingly more of them old than young. A glance at my watch showed that it was almost five o'clock, and since no one had troubled me on discovering my unlicensed possession of one of the inviting nooks, I felt free to question these new people.

A gentleman of fine presence, accompanying a pleasant looking lady, came up to me with friendly greeting.

"My good friends," said I, "will you kindly tell me what place this is, who these people are and what they do?"

With a cordial smile the lady answered,

"Certainly. We are one large happy family."

The gentleman must have seen a sort of derisive smile cross my face (my inward thought was, one of those new sects that are springing up with somewhat

mushroom-like growth all over the country), for he hastened to add,

“But not the kind of which you are thinking.” Continuing he said, “About ten years ago, a lady somewhat elderly, and her husband, also no longer young, were left alone in the world without children, but with plenty of money and decided to create a model home. Permit me,” he broke off, “to introduce myself as Mr. Andrews, their nephew, and this,” turning to his companion, “is Miss Bates, one of the best and most charming ‘spirits’ here.”

This introduction so frankly given brought out, of course, a revelation of my own name and residence, and in brief how my fondness for exploring and investigating had led me hither.

“But you were telling me,” I said, addressing Mr. Andrews after we had chatted awhile, “how this wonderful place came into existence.”

“So I was,” he answered, smiling a little. “Well, to proceed, these dear old

people conceived the happy idea of building a home and founding a sort of ideal refuge for young and old, with or without means, who had no immediate family or friends to look after their welfare. Together they drew plans for the building, but the difficulty was to find the right locality. Though no longer young, they were yet strong and able to travel, so spent many days and weeks searching for a place satisfactory as to climate both for human beings and for what livestock they might care to raise, with soil lending itself readily to the cultivation of various nutritious vegetables and fruits, and with abundant space for the growth of this ideal colony. Evidently they could have found no better location than this for the seasons here are never extreme, and nature seems to have smiled her blessing on the good work so far, since all our efforts have met with unusual success. Shall I go on?" he questioned, stopping almost abruptly.

A simultaneous yes from Miss Bates and myself must have indicated a real interest, and being thus encouraged he proceeded,

“After finding a satisfactory site, they next erected this substantial building of plain brick, in which the first objects to be attained were cleanliness, comfort and convenience. They wished it commodiously arranged with light and airy bedrooms, diningroom, kitchens, and cosy nooks taking the place of the long and stately drawing-room, these last being so arranged and connected with each other as to make large assembly-rooms should occasion demand. A carefully selected library was also to have suitable quarters, growing with the place.”

By this time my curiosity was so keen that I begged the privilege of seeing the whole plant with explanations added as my guides took me through, which request was most readily granted. But before proceeding, I could not refrain from

asking why it was that I had found the place apparently deserted. In answer to this query Mr. Andrews said, while he strolled leisurely along,

“As you have perhaps noticed, many, in fact most of the family are elderly people. In following out the plan we have tried not to forget that older persons need more sleep, that they are particularly apt to wish to ‘take a nap’ during the higher degrees of heat, or perhaps in the afternoon anyway, so for the benefit of all we made the rule of taking an hour or two of sleep or rest about this time every day. This rule is, of course, not compulsory except insofar that no one may do anything that might in any way disturb the peace of those wishing to enjoy a restful hour. Hence the reason for your thinking you had discovered a sort of deserted village.”

Time was passing notwithstanding this most interesting conversation, and it seemed wise that I should be seeking shel-

ter for the night, also something to satisfy a very natural hunger. Explaining to my new found acquaintances that I should need to get on and requesting permission to return the next day so that I might accept their invitation to see the home in all its details, Miss Bates exclaimed,

“Why go farther?” Do you think that we have failed to provide a great chamber or two for a chance visitor, or that there is not full and plenty with which to refresh those who merit out entertainment? If you will accept our hospitality, I am sure you will be most welcome during your stay in these parts.”

Naturally, I was very glad to accept the invitation as cordially as it was extended, including as it did an offer to send to the station for my luggage.

As we talked my attention was attracted to the dainty white tablecloths, glimpses of which could be seen as they were being spread on the tables mentioned previously. These had been

wheeled to pleasant parts of the grounds and near to convenient cupboards skilfully concealed by the trees and garden benches. From these cupboards bright faced young women were taking plain, neat china, glassware, knives, forks and spoons and busily arranging the tables for supper. I appreciated the bright mind which had conceived these conveniences, but was not prepared to see the food brought in little carts and distributed to the various tables. There was full and plenty of everything, fresh, wholesome bread, fruit, summer salads, golden butter, rich milk and delicious cake, everything looking the more appetizing by being in this,—nature's own dininghall, decorated by her gifts in all their glorious beauty.

“That looks most inviting,” I remarked, adding a little mischievously, “what are you going to do with the occasional tea drinker or coffee ‘fiend’? There seems provision for neither beverage, served either hot or cold.”

“Those who wish either cold can have all they desire,” Mr. Andrews answered, “for it is brought with the other food. For the convenience of those preferring it hot, perhaps the easier way to explain our plan is to take you to one of those hidden closets.” And we wended our way thither.

“Here, you see,” he continued, “is a small iron disk to which an electric wire is attached. Underneath is a good sized asbestos plate for protection from the heated disk. Turning this little switch, in almost a twinkling tea or coffee can be served steaming hot. By means of this little apparatus also, we are able to heat sufficient water for cleansing the dishes and other articles, which saves carrying back and forth to the main storeroom everything except the food. It is deemed economy to keep this in one place that better account may be kept of the supply and less waste result than would be possible if the food were distributed in indi-

vidual iceboxes. The closets, though skilfully built, are made strong in every way, so that we feel no danger in leaving our material in them, besides there are some who take turns as watchmen, and we feel safe in their care. Therefore everything is arranged conveniently and safely."

"There is no doubt of that," I replied, "for you have certainly studied how to get out of life the most and best, yet without the appearance of laziness, making the most of nature's gifts and resources and putting them into use for the benefit of all."

"In the language of the poet," remarked Miss Bates, "we 'Taste the joy that springs from labor.'"

Taking our places at one of the tables, (there was no choice for all looked equally tempting, the members of each group seeming to have benignity stamped on their faces) my friends introduced me here and there and the same cordial greet-

ing was apparent in all. Bright, cheerful conversation made the meal lively, newspaper topics were discussed with equal zest by young and old, every one, apparently, seeming abreast of the times. There was no portioning off of all the young or all the old, but a happy mingling of both. For is it not so in everything in life? Even as the older branches on the tree are decaying and falling off, they can feel the new life blood and companionship of the younger shoots pushing forth to take their places when they shall have withered and fallen. Only the other day I had given me three red roses on one stem. One was full blown to the degree of decay. The next was a little deeper in shade, all its petals uncurled, but ready in a little while to follow the other. The last was rich in its deep red beauty, the outer petals open, but the center just unfolding. So it seemed to me that this happy mingling of all ages was a most beautiful element in this Utopian scheme.

The supper was one of the most enjoyable of my life, and is to this day always a pleasant memory. After the meal, all seemed to take a share, so far as in his or her strength lay, in putting things in order without confusion, and those exempt for any cause strolled about in the lovely evening air, or sat and chatted with their neighbors. And the glorious sunset added beauty to the scene, fitly illustrating these exquisite lines,—

“Touched by a light that hath no name
A glory never sung,
Aloft on sky and mountain wall
Are God’s great pictures hung.”

I wended my way here and there, feeling safe and happy in this haven of rest, finding all with whom I talked very interesting.

As darkness crept on, the grounds were beautifully illuminated by myriads of incandescent lights in various colored globes, shedding their soft radiance upon

the scene, making it almost fairylike in its beauty.

Inquiring the hour for retiring, I was informed that no limit was placed, it being understood that each would use discretion as to proper hours. They were after all located not very far from various attractions and churches of different denominations, accessible by conveyances for the older people and by an electric railway which I later discovered came within easy reach of their grounds. They told me, however, that though not meaning to appear selfish, it was found with such a household, such a variety of people and approved amusements of all kinds, there was little outside attraction for many of them. Of course certain supplies had to be obtained and extra produce disposed of, and for those not caring to make the necessary trip others were always glad and willing to do their errands.

I was shown for the night to a dear little room. "Dear," because a large

bedroom with canopied bed, imposing furniture and heavy draperies never appeals to me so much as a simple, but daintily arranged chamber which makes one just long to lie right down and go to sleep. This furniture was white with a little sprig of green vine decorating it, the color scheme of the room in every particular having been carried out in a way at once refreshing and attractive.

In the act of drawing the shades at the windows the scene without claimed my attention. The little hamlet a few miles away lay wrapped in peaceful slumber. Against the unclouded sky the spires of the churches were outlined distinctly, while the hundreds of electric lights appeared like stars of dazzling brilliancy. Down the unseen tracks of the railroad near by an electric car came speeding on its way. Moved by that wonderful, invisible power, it seemed to have come and gone, in its extreme rapidity, almost by magic, reappearing in the far distance

like a will-o'-the-wisp as now and then it was hidden from view by the tall trees.

My sleep was that of the just as well as the tired, for on bidding my friends good night I learned that I had walked much farther than it seemed, having of course taken the longer route.

On awaking the next morning it was raining and though a walk in the rain is by no means objectionable to me, it was pleasant to think of being already at headquarters for the day, particularly when so many interesting things were in store. After arranging my toilet I went out on the little balcony leading from the room. From there I could enjoy with renewed appreciation the grounds about the house, being surprised at their vast extent, none too large, however, in view of the purpose of the family. Everything looked bright and fresh from the rain as it gently fell, the fountains jetting up in welcome greeting.

Thinking it must be time for breakfast I reentered the room and started for the

diningroom. Going through the hall I met a charming little woman, who gave me a bright morning smile and invited me to go with her to breakfast. She had reached beyond her three score, her hair was as beautiful as spun silver, and her face bore the lines with which time stamps the character of our life. Hers was only kindly and she seemed my rose in its fullest bloom. Lightly putting my arm about her waist together we wended our way downstairs. She was bright and interesting, her inquiries being delicate, but to the point. She had seen me the night before, though it happened that I had not met her. My remark on the fact that it was raining brought out this answer,

“Yes, but we mind it not. We rejoice that our efforts are helped and blessed by God’s own hand, for do not the berries grow and ripen from the rain and sun, our vegetables increase in plenty and our cattle thrive on the rich grass, and does not it all help us to help each other in this

our cooperative plan to help one another? We are grateful for the rains, for the sunshine and for our many blessings."

Somehow I must have had an intuitive feeling that this little lady was none other than the kind spirited person who had laid the foundation for this happy home, and fearing not to give offense, I frankly asked if this were true.

"It is," she answered. "But since we have gotten so nicely started my husband has been taken from me." The gentle eyes grew moist as she continued, "I feel, however, that he has gone to that happier, brighter home, and although I miss him in many ways, I look forward to the union beyond and am making myself content and happy by trying to bring sunshine into the lives of others who have lost those equally dear. To me,

‘By his life alone,
Gracious and sweet, the better way was
shown.’ ”

I breathed a prayer of gratitude that the Father above had put it into the hearts of some, at least, to accept in such spirit their afflictions and to seek thus to bear them by giving and getting hope and cheer.

By this time we had reached the diningroom and Mr. Andrews seeing us, drew near. He introduced me to the lady, his aunt, Mrs. Chester, but I think she and I both felt that a very friendly feeling had already sprung up between us and, on my part, at least, I hoped it was cemented by the more formal introduction.

“Well,” remarked Mr. Andrews, “you see the rain will prevent our eating out of doors this morning, but we trust the meal inside will be equally enjoyable to you for we are a little proud of both our diningrooms.”

“I expect to find pleasure in seeing every side of the life here,” I replied, “and am somewhat glad that it is possible

to have the opportunity to observe it under all conditions."

Accompanying Mrs. Chester we passed into a large room with numerous tables and comfortable chairs having rubber tipped legs. On the walls were pictures, neatly and tastefully framed, of fish, game, fruit and vegetables in natural tints. Beautiful closets, with glass doors and drawers beneath, containing all the necessary table accessories, were arranged at convenient points. There were also other closets with artistically carved panels, the use of which I had yet to discover. Nothing, however, looked superfluous, the room being attractive, but intended for its particular purpose only.

There seemed to be no lingering, for when we sat down the room appeared to me as if it must contain its entire household. The tables drew my attention by their peculiar construction. They were round, the center appearing to be separate from the outer part and to revolve inde-

pendently. At regular intervals on the central part there were convenient small handles by which it could be turned and its contents reached by those sitting at the outer table. Everything was served ready to eat, coffee and tea being in patent vessels, into the bottom of which slipped a hot asbestos plate. The tables averaged about five persons, each of whom helped himself or was helped by another, the meal progressing as happily as that of the previous evening. Having no more choice than when out of doors, there was no seeking of a particular seat, but all contributed their quota to making the party at every table a pleasant one.

To have attained such perfect precision seemed to me must have cost the study of a lifetime yet they told me that even those who had been there but a short while seemed to fully appreciate the spirit of the home and to join readily with the rest in their efforts for the best welfare of all. Regular meal hours were fixed,

every one knew them and all came promptly.

After breakfast, the dishes were washed at convenient porcelain sinks which were disclosed on opening the other closets. The tables were reset for the next meal if it were likely to be eaten indoors, or the articles put away till next needed. Food and refuse were gathered in proper receptacles, put on the shelves of wheeled trucks and taken to their respective places. Everything was done not hastily, with the effort of hurrying to get through, but with the intent and purpose of doing it and doing it right and cheerfully.

I could not help thinking that it seemed as if some gentle fairy must have given her patronage here, the results appearing like magical wonders.

Mr. Andrews joined his aunt and myself as we were leaving the room. In the course of conversation it came out that he was by profession a doctor, and prac-

tised in the neighboring towns as well as in this immediate hamlet. Feeling that perhaps on my part it was taking too much of his time to show me about the place I said as much and he answered,

“Do not fear. In the first place, here in this particular locality I have little use for my professional knowledge. We seem to have been more than blessed with good health and spirits, and my ability, in greater or less degree, as a director for this home comes into better play than in the administering of my pills or powders.” A happy smile accompanied this remark as though he felt heartily grateful that it was true.

I asked Mrs. Chester whither she was bound and she said,

“To look after my children, keep busy and out of mischief for a while, but I shall see you later on. Take good care of her,” she said to Mr. Andrews as she left us.

“Which would you like to see first,” he questioned. “You have seen some of



The Home of the late Mrs. H. Alfarata Chapman
Thompson.

our ideas, but what appeals most strongly to you as next to be investigated?"

"Everything," I replied quickly, "and since I can not choose as all is equally interesting, you had better decide, for

‘The atmosphere
Breathes rest and comfort, and the many
chambers
Seem full of welcome.’”

"Very well, as you are a woman, I judge that the prettier parts may appeal to you most strongly and shall show you our conversation corners and parlour-ettes." And he led the way to one of the latter.

It was furnished in such manner as to show careful thought for adaptability to any season, yet seemed peculiarly suggestive of only one. There was no upholstered furniture to gather dust, lose shape, be uncomfortable in warm weather or hygienically unsafe. Pillows and adjustable seat cushions, however, were in plenty to be used presumably, in any way,

for the comfort of occupants on the attractive couches, chairs and rockers of willow. The floor in wood of artistically colored design had here and there a rug harmonizing in color, but light in weight. On the walls were a few carefully chosen pictures of summer scenes and themes suggesting thoughts of that season. A water-nymph, Pan, Psyche and other choice pieces of bric-a-brac roused my admiration, as did also the folios of small pictures giving views of cascades, mountain trails, lakes, forests and picturesque scenery. A cursory look at the magazines and books showed that they too were suggestive of nature study, outings and the many opportunities peculiar to the summer season, to come closer in touch with nature. The whole arrangement of the room seemed intended to suggest only summer and I asked if this had been their plan.

“Yes,” said Mr. Andrews in reply to my question, “that was part of the idea, but it was not intended to suggest such

thoughts only, for as I have already remarked, we know not extremes here. The thought in the arrangement of each of our principal rooms, as you will discover, was, in conjunction with this to give a basis for change and rest to the mind if one were alone, or to serve as an impetus for topics of conversation, discussions and talks that will be helpful as well as interesting, and we look for this in all our household so far as possible."

The idea seemed beautiful theoretically, but I could not help feeling a little skeptical about it.

From there we entered next what was evidently a music-room, for a fine piano stood open, choice music and books about music and musicians lay on the tables, and one or two different instruments gave proof that some of the people were interested in other lines. Here too, apparently, care had been taken to inspire to effort by portraits of some of the famous composers, including the beloved Mendelssohn, Rubenstein, Chopin, Liszt,

and an excellent copy of the favorite picture "Song without words," also known as "Mendelssohn and his Sister." There was no lavish display in anything, but the whole room bespoke a wish to rouse and keep interested those with talent in this direction. As we turned to leave, a man, by no means young, but with purpose reflected on his strong, kind face, entered and Mr. Andrews introduced him as Mr. Whitehurst. Not wishing to interrupt him I said,

"We shall not disturb you, for I presume you are another Franz Abt or perhaps a Pinsuti about to try the melodies floating through your brain, and then give them forth to the world to enjoy."

"No," he answered laughingly, "I am practically but a beginner. Though having a little latent talent, until I came here the chance had never been offered to cultivate it. Now I have opportunity to practise and do what I can after regular duties are finished, and am very happy." After chatting a little while we bade him

good morning, and left him to pursue his studies.

Once outside of hearing, I ventured to inquire what the occupation might be of this particular man, and was told that his work lay chiefly in the care of the flower and vegetable gardens as he had excellent knowledge in this direction.

“Mr. Whitehurst came to us,” said Mr. Andrews, “heartsick and discouraged. He had sought work in his own and other lines without success, was alone in the world and not in the best of health. We asked what he could do, also an honest statement of where he had come from together with information on a few other minor points, then gave him a chance to do what he could. I am glad to say he has proven fully worthy of our confidence. He has under him several of our younger men who are equally interested in the best farming and floriculture. By agreement and careful arrangement of their work, each has time for his own special line of amusement, and Mr.

Whitehurst has practised diligently. Fortunately, having in our household one who is quite a skilled musician we have been able to guide and cheer him on. I think we shall never have any regret for he has proven most exemplary in every way."

Again I inwardly asked many blessings on those good people whose purpose in life was of the highest and noblest. While thinking thus, we had reached another room which I immediately conjectured had been planned to represent fall. Here again was unupholstered furniture, but its framework carried the colors of autumn foliage. Some of the pictures were of the woods in their rich beauty at the turning of the leaves, others were of the hunt, the vineyard and merry parties gathering nuts. The literature also suggested seasonable topics and one could only feel happy amid such surroundings. I was getting bewildered by the successful manner in which this novel idea had been carried out and less skep-

tical, and had to show my admiration in numerous expressions of praise.

A graceful turn past pretty corners brought us to the library which was so inviting with its little tables, comfortable chairs and shelves well filled with the best literature, dictionaries, cyclopedias and other reference books. Pictures of the "Poets Corner," of the "Taj Mahal," of the "Children of Charles I of England," of the "Colosseum" were an inspiration to explore into the history of various countries, while excellent casts of the "Winged Victory of Samothrace," "Mercury," and the "Three Fates," busts of Homer, Milton, Joan of Arc, Longfellow and Whittier seemed to make one involuntarily long to gain knowledge of mythology, art, famous people, poetry and other interesting subjects.

"Our library is small as yet," said Mr. Andrews, "but we wish it to grow with us, to speak in itself of the progress of our life here. Therefore selections and additions are made with judicious care

and we have allowed ample room for a few years growth at least.

Leading into the library was a smaller room or alcove arranged with conveniences for a teacher and pupils, and even as we entered a little girl was just finishing a morning lesson in arithmetic. A bright face young woman accompanied her and both looked happy. Our introductions and conversation revealed the fact that the elder was a Miss Lorimer and had formerly been governess in a family of wealth, who believed in educating their children by travel as well as by books. She seemed to have a store of knowledge made all the richer by coming in close contact and studying things in fact as well as in fancy.

"My little pupil, Alice, here," she said, "is particularly happy in having mastered a very hard problem for her in mathematics. We get on very well in other subjects, but this seems more difficult. Therefore to make it perhaps a little plainer and also less tedious than con-

stant study from books, we are going out now to study arithmetic from nature. Everything looks refreshed since the rain and the ground absorbs the moisture so quickly that I think we shall be safe. We are going to add, subtract, multiply and divide the rows of potatoes in the vegetable garden and incidentally take a lesson in botany as we study the blossoms, leaves, roots and general manner in which potatoes grow. We shall have a happy time, shall we not, Alice?"

"Yes, Miss Lorimer," the child answered. "I am always happy here. While I am busy with my hands putting away the dishes and placing the chairs about the tables in the diningroom, my mind is also full of thoughts about my lessons and hoping you will have something new in store for me. And I feel so glad to be useful that it seems to take almost only a minute to do anything. My! but I'm glad they brought me here."

The dear little face did indeed look bright and happy as we all said good

morning and they turned away together.

"Truly," I said to Mr. Andrews, "you have certainly all learned the pleasure of giving as well as of receiving, for Miss Lorimer looks quite as pleased as little Alice."

"Yes," he answered, "that is so. They who thus give of themselves seem to be as glad to impart their knowledge as those seeking it are to gain it. Here, any who lack instruction are helped in all lines by those having ability to teach. Miss Lorimer from her large experience is very successful in teaching both young and old, and has a most delightful way of adopting methods likely to keep all interested and result in real study."

"As an aid in such work," he continued, "we have started here a miniature museum," and he led the way across the room to where glass cases stood containing specimens of birds, insects, minerals and animals that were common about the place or that had been obtained elsewhere and contributed. An excep-

tionally fine botanic collection carefully mounted was of more than ordinary interest.

"How was it possible," I asked, "for you to think of everything to thus complete the family life here?"

"Perhaps it was easier than you think," Mr. Andrews replied. "Although my aunt and her husband in establishing this home had certain lines which they wished to follow, they never failed to get ideas from all and every one who could contribute anything toward making life within these walls happy for both young and old. They were fortunate in having among their friends some men and women with rare minds, a little means, and, like themselves, without relatives. Therefore, when spoken to regarding this novel scheme they were only too glad to become members of the household, to do their share in its labor and contribute their quota for the good of all."

"Had this not been so," I answered, "your wonderful home would have been

an utter impossibility. It takes, first of all, people possessing broad, liberal spirits, willing to give in every way for the benefit of others, to make success crown such an effort as this. Knowledge is a very necessary item, but unaccompanied with generosity of heart, will ever be like the miser's gold hidden away,—a principal accruing no interest. While not in use, neither can circulate for the benefit of the world or carry out its real purpose.”

To this Mr. Andrews replied, “Your comparison is not only a good one, but quite true. We try in every way to live for each other and to hoard up nothing.”

“But here we are to our next parlor-ette which may possibly be termed ‘winter:’” However, if this means to you only snow covered earth, ice-locked rivers, people in furs and the jingle of sleigh-bells, you can look for suggestions for such thoughts in the pictures mainly and some of the literature. We do not wish our smiles to freeze on the lips, our

hearts to coldly respond to the pleas of others, nor our minds even temporarily inactive. We would get from winter thoughts of purity when Mother Earth puts on her ermine mantle; of lightheartedness as the children skate merrily over frozen waters glistening in the sunlight, or faces smile out on you as sleighs skim by with their happy occupants; of a happy home circle gathered about a great open fire as grandfather and grandmother tell of bygone days when they too were young and enjoyed roasting nuts or apples before the bright fire, or shook the corn-popper till every kernel had burst into a toothsome morsel."

I could easily imagine such happy scenes as Mr. Andrews pictured and marveled not to find the "winter" room quite as he had described it. The furniture was of a rich, warm coloring, still carrying out the hygienic principle, since none of it was upholstered, but, as in the other rooms, its odd shapes and restful pillows made it equally as inviting as if

of the richest satin. Against the snowy trimmings of the room and the white-framed pictures it was most effective. The books of travel, history and other more solid subjects, and magazines containing biographic sketches and articles on topics of the day, invited real, earnest reading. But an object of special interest was a rug of quite good size, in the center of the floor, whose color was pure white. I knew immediately that it was not fur, since they had told me that there were no extremes in weather in that locality. Presumably, therefore, a rug of that material would not find resting-place. On examination it proved to be nothing but white cord. Mr. Andrews seeing my attention was drawn to it explained,

“That rug we prize very highly, though so simple in its makeup. It is, as you see, knit of plain white cord and put on a substantial backing. One of our eldest ladies, now gone to rest, enjoyed passing some of her leisure time in this

way, with the result that the rug is not only unique, but quite effective. Though from its fluffiness it looks somewhat heavy, with the great conveniences in our laundry it is easily washed and is therefore always white and clean."

I could almost see the dear hands plying the needle, and the smiles of pleasure that must have crossed the good woman's face as she watched the work grow beneath her nimble fingers till at last it was done and she could give it, showing in its color the purity of her life, in its work the activity of mind and heart till the last, and in all, her love for this happy home on earth.

I liked this room so well I would fain have lingered, but I felt that Mr. Andrews's time was precious.

The one next to this proved to be an attractive corner which in itself was none other than a small art gallery. I recognized copies of a number of the masterpieces, well chosen, and intended, presumably, to carry out their mission of

creating true admiration and appreciation of the beautiful. Here too were books about art and artists. Neat portfolios contained specimens, which were more than fair, of some of the efforts of members of the household. There were also a few excellent pieces of statuary. At one side, hidden by light drapery, was an exit to another room of larger size in which I discovered was a small, but seemingly very fine pipe organ. Encircled in suitable frames were portraits of Bach, Haydn and Handel, renowned for their exquisite religious compositions. There were also enlarged copies of details from Sargent's famous Frieze of the Prophets and Abbey's Quest of the Holy Grail, while an excellent reproduction of Correggio's Holy Night with all its appealing sweetness awoke in me renewed admiration for the picture.

I felt instinctively that the purpose of this room was not only to give opportunity for practice and pleasure to those whose musical ability lay in this direc-

tion, but also, should any wish, to be used for sacred service during Sunday hours or at other times. Turning to Mr. Andrews I asked if my surmise was correct.

"Yes," he said, "often many of our older members feel unable to take the long trip to church. Frequently, also, the younger people for some reason are disinclined to go. Amid such surroundings, however, there is opportunity for all to express their praise and thanksgiving."

Our way then led us to another room whose predominant coloring in delicate greens, exquisite pictures, inviting books and graceful furniture declared it to be indicative of spring with all her beauty of leafing trees, budding blossoms, rippling waters released from winter's cold embrace and the time when all nature seems to have gained new life, new strength, new inspiration. I think I liked this best. I could get from it my conception of what our lives should be. Free from the repelling cold of winter in our

manner, in our thoughts and in our hearts; free from the feeling of depression, lassitude and inactivity accompanying hot summer days; free from the involuntary sense of sadness and cheerlessness that sometimes comes to those who know the changes of the seasons and in fall see the days glide by, now bright, now gloomy, the leaves showing forth in all their autumn splendor before they gently drop and die, and nature seems to have reached perfection only to wither and decay. But spring carries the blessed thought of resurrection, of a new life on earth and beyond, of hope and cheer, of inspiration to do and to be what is best. So of all I proclaimed this my choice.

“Spring, Spring, beautiful spring
Laden with glory and light you come;
With the leaf, the bloom, and the butterfly’s wing,
Making our earth a fairy home.
The primroses glitter — the violets
peep;

And zephyr is feasting on flower and bloom.

Arouse, ye sluggards, what soul shall sleep

While the lark's in the sky, and the bee's on the palm?

The sweetest song, and the loudest string,

Should pour a welcome to beautiful Spring."

The beauty and restful peace of the entire place appealed to me so strongly that I longed to ask permission to spend at least a part of my vacation days there. The idea and wish growing stronger I turned to Mr. Andrews and said,

"Pardon the many questions with which I may possibly trouble you, and also what may be an unusual request. Do you ever take as boarders or as temporary members of the household, to do their share of duties here, strangers who may chance to find this delightful place?"

“Yes,” said Mr. Andrews, “we have had both, though we prefer the latter for the reason that the visitor has better opportunity to study our life, perhaps to make suggestions in lines of which we had not thought, or to take our ideas with him or her, as the case may be, and sow the good seed in other soil.”

“I fear that I should have little chance to do any such work though I should certainly try” I answered. My inward thought was, however, that perhaps it would be possible for me to remain long enough to get a thorough understanding of their life, describe it in such manner and give it to the world in such form that the excellent work might thus be increased indirectly by my efforts. Aloud, I continued,

“Would you be willing to take me as one or the other for a portion of my leisure or for all? I could give some compensation and also share in certain work.

“I think,” said Mr. Andrews, “that we can arrange it satisfactorily to both

parties and would suggest that you send immediately for anything further that you may require."

"Thank you most sincerely," I replied, "but in the meantime as we have taken nearly all the morning in getting thus far and as you have graciously permitted me to remain longer, shall I not excuse you, Mr. Andrews, for those who have a greater claim on your time? I shall now feel more or less free to roam at will in the rooms I have already seen and do not wish to engage too much of the time of you good people."

"I *am* a little surprised to find that it is so late," he answered, "still one can hardly skim over our model if he would know it in all its details. There are some patients whom I must see, so I will leave you for a while.

As he left me I turned to study more the grouping of the rooms we had visited. They were on either side an elliptical shaped hallway that terminated in a graceful entrance to the dining-room

which was the full width of the house at the rear. In the center of the hall was a most ingeniously constructed fountain which served not only to beautify, but also as a convenient place for drinking water for that floor. It represented a miniature lake in which, indeed, sweet waterlilies appeared to float. They proved to be, however, but fine enamel work in colors so natural as to tempt one to gather the lilies as they lay there. From the ewer in the right hand of the exquisitely carved figure in the center, the water poured forth to the lake beneath, while in the left hand another beautiful lily was upheld, completely hiding in its cup a drinking-glass.

I lingered here with admiring gaze. The incandescent lights above had shades of green and white only, and I longed for evening to come when I could see the fountain in its full beauty. The potted ferns arranged so cleverly amid the large pieces of natural rock made the effect very charming. On the previous even-

ing, being somewhat fatigued and enthralled by all that I had seen before entering the house, I had given this delightful spot only a cursory glance and had not realized how beautiful it was.

Ascending the broad stairway I happened to meet Mrs. Chester and with her had the pleasure of visiting several of the rooms and their occupants.

Among the first on whom we called was an elderly gentleman. There he sat in his easy chair, looking bright and cheerful despite the gray clouds without. Our introduction revealed the fact that I had known some of the younger members of his family, but they were all gone, and he, the last, had come to this haven of rest and peace. Though a little feeble, he was able to get about, slowly but surely, with the younger people's help, and I was happy to see as his companion a young boy who had been sitting there so quietly that we had hardly noticed him.

"And who may you be," I asked.

"Well," he said, "I call myself Mr. Lansing's 'chum,' because we spend so much time together, but my name is Ned Tompkins."

"So you are Mr. Lansing's 'chum.' What do you mean by that?" I inquired.

"It is this way," he said, "when they found and brought me here six years ago Mr. Lansing saw me and began to take particular interest in me. Though they were all good his kindness seemed to touch the right spot and was very welcome to a waif like me, for he seemed like a grandpa would be to a boy if he had one, and I never knew how nice it was to have a real grandpa, but used to imagine it lots of times. So I've tried to be all I could to him and have grown to love him dearly, and we are good comrades. Aren't we, Mr. Lansing?" he broke off abruptly.

"That we are, my lad," Mr. Lansing answered, "and very glad I am to have you." Turning to me he continued, "He

makes the days go happily by for me by bringing me the papers and reading (for my eyes don't see just as they used), and now and then we play checkers or the other games dear to such old people as I, and days when I can't get around so well, he never forgets me up here."

"But you don't tell," interposed Ned, "all you do for me, how you have taken the old books down in the library and explained things to me as I have read, and how we have built bridges, cut out steamboats from paper and wood, and had the most wonderful trains and locomotives, and how we have played we were in different stations and telegraphed and telephoned, and best of all how we made a tiny little elevator and ran it with electricity by attaching a wire to the current. Why, we have had the greatest fun you ever saw, and now I am getting so big and strong that he can trust himself to me and I am very proud and happy." And he tried to hide the tears that would come, despite his being 'big and

strong,' because, I suppose, they were tears of joy like many of us have, in that he was able to do something in return for the old gentleman's kindness.

"Ned is a good boy," said Mrs. Chester, "and every day we learn the wisdom of our decision in taking the lad into our hearts and home." The kindly hand on the boy's shoulder as she spoke these words and gentle pat as we turned to go I know helped to keep warm his love and affection for the dear good woman.

"I am very glad to have seen you both," I said, in parting, "and know that we shall meet often, for I am going to be here too for a while, and enjoy this happy home. But good morning to you now, I want to see more of the people here."

As we left them I, as usual, immediately plied Mrs. Chester with many questions.

"The man is no longer young," I said, "in what way does he contribute to your

home here, for of course, like all the rest, he prefers to do something."

"In the first place," replied Mrs. Chester, "his many fine attributes and noble character are a lesson to each of us and an incentive to try to become likewise.

'He wears the marks of many years well spent,
Of virtue, truth well tried, and wise experience.'

Were there nothing else, it would be enough to have such a grand example before us day after day to study. Beyond that, as you probably gathered from what the boy said, Mr. Lansing is a fine scholar and can give of his store of knowledge much for our benefit. Till his mind shall fail utterly, we can draw from him in every way, and in any case, we shall give of the love and kindness that fills our hearts for him. Ned is indeed very glad that he is growing large, for when Mr. Lansing feels too weak to attempt the long walk through the halls to meals, or

out of doors, he has a comfortable wheelchair in which Ned not only rolls him to the elevator to bring him downstairs, but takes him out in the open air so that he has opportunity to enjoy with the rest of us all of God's precious gifts. He has but to ring his bell for anything wanted or to share in whatever the hour may have in store, and we gladly serve him or help him to join us. His prayers in our hours of religious service are most helpful and beautiful, and not infrequently we hear his voice, though weak, joining in our songs of praise and hymns of thanksgiving."

"You can not realize how all this thoughtfulness and unselfish consideration for older people impresses me, but does Ned never tire of Mr. Lansing's company, or is it the old story of opposites having strong attraction for each other?" I smilingly asked.

"No," replied Mrs. Chester, "Ned seems never too weary. On the contrary, soon after his arrival he asked if he

could not have a room near to Mr. Lings's, which privilege we granted, and their constant and close association has developed into a most loving relationship which is a delight to us all."

"It is most fortunate," I answered, "that this is true as it works in so satisfactorily with your aims and purposes."

"It is but one more of the many things for which we have to be thankful," said Mrs. Chester in a tone of gratitude.

During our conversation we had walked leisurely along the hall, which in itself was as attractive as every other part of the home. Beautiful pictures graced the walls and evidently these people did not believe in confining flowers, books, newspapers or other literature to any particular spot, for there were numerous plants in unexpected corners, whose bright bloom and delicate fragrance charmed you to them, and magazines and papers on tables or in racks tempted one to gather a bit of knowledge

while resting in one of the easy chairs conveniently at hand.

I glanced in the various chambers as we passed along and saw they were being rapidly put in order. I wondered what sort of system could make this part of the work run with almost clocklike precision, but when Mrs. Chester told me that each who was able took care of her own rooms and that the rest were looked after by voluntary choice and understanding between the female constituency, I could quickly realize that with every convenience at hand and willing, loving hearts, labor in all directions for every one was as much pleasure as toil.

“As for the men,” said Mrs. Chester in farther explanation, “those who seem best fitted for certain lines of work are given opportunity to carry out their tastes and efforts in that direction, varying it during leisure moments with whatever diversion appeals to them or a different kind of work, if they choose, which latter they very often do. But

how this plan works you will find out later. Let us stop here and visit for a while," she concluded, at the same time knocking at the door of another chamber.

A sweet voice bade us enter and on opening the door we found the occupant to be, as I had supposed, a young woman of about twenty. She was reclining against a bed-rest with comfortable pillows, but something about her led me to think that she was a little helpless.

"This is Miss Delancey," said Mrs. Chester in introducing us and I came close so as to cordially press the fragile hand extended in greeting. We chatted a while, and then Mrs. Chester said that she would excuse herself and leave me with Miss Delancey for a little visit. I quite enjoyed the prospect of seeing something of the character of this young lady.

"Having found such an abundance of everything here to contribute to the highest degree of health and happiness," I said, "I think I hardly expected to find

any one who has not, seemingly, taken the elixir of life and become proof against age or disease."

"No," she answered, smiling a little, "here is one who must ever be dependent on the kindness of others. Though with assistance I can sometimes get from the bed to a chair, the spine is affected and there is little hope of my ever recovering. Ofttimes I have nearly given up, but with the cheer and comfort of all these kind people I feel that I have still much for which to be thankful, and so have tried to find my special corner in life and to fill it as best I can even though a cripple. God has blessed me with all the senses, and when I realize the value of these contrasted with the loss of sight, hearing, or the power of speech, life has become almost dazzling with all that it holds out for me. You see," she broke off, "that if nothing else, I am ever anxious to talk to a willing listener."

"And," I added, "you certainly have a most willing one in me. I am only too



Education Building, Albany N. Y., where Mrs. H. Alfarata Chapman Thompson was stenographer for many years in Catalogue Department, University of the State of New York.

glad to hear that you may have to say, and am more than pleased that you are inclined to talk so freely of yourself."

"Yes," she continued, somewhat meditatively, "I have decided that if there is anything in my enforced invalidism that can be turned into a joy, I am resolved to make it so. But at first you don't know how hard it was not to feel envious, disheartened, cross and fretful, until, as I have said, I suddenly woke up and found that there was much for my brain and hands to do if only the heart gave them the right impulse. So the good people here give me what I ask for, within reason, and I spend my time thinking, planning and studying to give of whatever in myself is worth the giving. Fortunately, Mr. Andrews being a doctor, insures for me the best of care. Also, one of the ladies here has been and is a most excellent trained nurse and is kindness itself to me. Her generous consideration of my welfare, and constant help and attention are a boon and solace to my heart.

All women have their vanities and weaknesses you know," she jestingly concluded.

"May I ask how you employ the hours to make the time slip by with other than lagging footsteps?"

"Certainly," Miss Delancey answered. "Being a woman and an invalid I one day bethought me of the many who were afflicted likewise, but not so happily situated, and I immediately tried to think what I could do and how I could do it to make the days less weary for them as, perhaps, they too lay in bed, unable to be up and doing. So I have taken from various magazines and papers attractive pictures and good literature, and from these the younger unfortunates have made small books, not too heavy, with carefully arranged pages of different colored muslins. It has been a pleasure also to select a short piece of poetry and search for a picture or two to illustrate it. Again, I have taken prose writings and, having a little ability for sketching,

have drawn on white muslin, pictures which I thought might make the story more readable. I have made a number of such books for old and young, sending them far and wide, and many are the letters of thanks I have received and wept over, realizing from their tone that the writers had little idea that the maker of the books was herself a cripple. Then too, I can sew fairly well and knit, so the variation resulting from these occupations, besides reading and studying for my own benefit, has given me plenty of employment and sometimes I almost forget that I can't walk and dance as many of my age like to do."

"Would that I could make you a sort of traveling object lesson in the study of patience and submission," I said, fearing not to give offense by this remark, "for it seems to me that there are many persons blessed with abundance of strength and health who could learn much from you and make their own lives and the lives of those about them much happier.

But am I not staying too long, and, if you will pardon the question, may I ask how you get your meals or join in the other activities of the household?"

"If you only knew how glad I am to have you," she cordially responded, "you would not ask if you were staying too long. But in reply to your other question," she continued, "it is easy enough. The lady whom I have mentioned, Mrs. Marvin (and by the way I hope you will meet her and learn more of her) seems never to forget me, and either comes herself or sends some one else, if something specially interesting is going on downstairs, and at meal times it rests with myself as to whether I shall be taken down or eat up here. Another young lady of almost my own age has the next room and next to hers is Mrs. Marvin's chamber. Our rooms open into a fourth which serves as a little individual sitting-room for all three and this we have most cosily arranged. We can even have our own musicales, for the young lady plays

the guitar and I the mandolin, and we have many pleasant hours with ourselves and any others who come to spend their leisure with us. To hear the laughter and ripple of talk that emanates from here would hardly lead one to think that such a poor one as I was among the number."

As we were thus talking, a pleasant-faced woman entered the room after a gentle rap, which must have been hers individually, because Miss Delancey seemed to know who it was immediately.

"I am so glad you came just now, Mrs. Marvin," she said, "as I was anxious that I, particularly, should have the pleasure of making you acquainted with our new friend here, which I do gladly."

Mrs. Marvin's gracious manners and genuine cordiality stamped her as the sort of "spirit" one could never weary of, and I marveled not at Miss Delancey's affection for her.

She impressed me as the sort of woman to whom one would feel free to go for

sympathy and advice and who could be relied on. Though she was not young, you could see in the smile on her lips, the brightness of her eyes, and the elasticity of her movements that she had taken life aright,—growing into womanhood with all that maturity of years and judgment means, yet not failing to remember that we can keep the heart young and so carry with us, notwithstanding advancing years, the beautiful attributes of noble womanhood, even as the rose in its full bloom has yet all the sweet fragrance of the opening bud.

Mrs. Marvin brought us to a realization that time was going and that the next meal was about ready. Looking out I saw that though there was hardly any sign of the early morning shower, save a diamond drop here and there on the leaves and flowers, it was of course unwise to eat out of doors, and concluded that we should have dinner, also, in the house. As Miss Delancey had spoken of not always going downstairs, it occurred

to me to exercise my privilege of being a member of the family now, and suggest that we three dine together. I therefore said,

“If it would be agreeable to both of you, it would be a pleasure to me to have our meal up here and I shall be only too glad to get it for us if you will direct me how and where to go. I want to learn everything, you know,” I concluded with a little laugh.

“That would be very nice,” said Miss Delancey, “for me particularly, and we shall endeavor to have sunshine within even if good old Sol does feel like hiding his face a little today.”

After receiving instructions from Mrs. Marvin I set out to perform my task. She said I need bring only food, as she kept all the necessary articles for setting the table in a closet in her own room. On reaching the kitchen I found that it was quite the easiest thing in the world, apparently, to carry our repast upstairs or anywhere else, for the matter of that. I

was given one of the specially arranged light wheel-tables,* with its various spaces and hollows in which the dishes sat snugly, without danger of upsetting and their contents being spilled. I took some of everything prepared for the meal, and as I worked, could look into the dining-room where the tables were being made ready. Though all was activity, so thorough was the understanding between each person that everything seemed to go on as smoothly as if it were at all times the duty of one individual to do a certain part and nothing more. I had almost forgotten that my two guests were perhaps patiently waiting for my return, and hastily rolling the table into

* In studying the economic gain from using, instead of a dumb-waiter, a wheel-table or truck (provided of course one has the use of an elevator) it seems to me that the greatest saving is in the matter of steps, both in carrying and taking articles to and from a dumb-waiter. A wheel-table can be rolled from point to point till everything has been placed upon it. Food needing to be served hot has only to be put in the dishes that are waiting for it, and the whole process to my idea gives better satisfaction than the use of the dumb-waiter, except insofar as the latter will always be convenient for economy of time under certain circumstances too obvious to describe.

the elevator I was taken up and soon had everything before my friends for them to make further disposition thereof.

I think that meal was a pleasant one to all three of us. The table so invitingly arranged by Mrs. Marvin gave zest to our appetites, and the quiet humor in many of her remarks together with Miss Delancey's sparkling conversation, made the time speed by rapidly. I was curious to find out the former's thoughts on women's dressing and to how great a degree the idea of simplicity was carried out in this establishment.

"Well," said Mrs. Marvin in answer to my spoken question, "having spent some years in a hospital, naturally my ideas incline strongly to the greatest simplicity in dress for various reasons, among the first of which is freedom of movement, that all the organs and every part of the body may be able to perform without effort those functions for which they were intended."

I looked at her and frankly said, "If such is your belief and you carry it out, you look neither like a dress reformist, nor yet a fashion-plate figure. How is it that you are so successful in not attracting attention as being either, and yet are such a fine example of a blending of both?"

"Very easily," replied Mrs. Marvin. "By careful study I have discovered that if our sex will demand certain kinds of materials and sensible fashions there is no question but that they will get both."

"First of all," she continued, "I think you will concede that much of the weakness, fretfulness, and constant worrying of women comes from the fact that they suffer, through Fashion's decree, irritation and annoyance by wearing many useless things which are neither an addition to their looks nor conducive to sweet tempers. When we have learned that high collars cause headaches and affect the eyes, that tight shoes and gloves prevent proper circulation, that the small wasp

waist pushes vital organs out of their proper positions, that trailing skirts carry dust and dirt from place to place, even microbes of disease, and finally, when we have become wiser by discarding all these things, then we are on the high road to better health and better dispositions, which in turn bring more contentment and courage to meet the *real* trials and vexations of life, and ought not this to result in more happiness for ourselves and those coming in contact with us?"

"I can not help agreeing with you," I replied, "for there is nothing but truth in all you have said. But tell me," I laughingly said, "how large your store of patience is to hope for such a complete reform as this."

"Well," she replied, in the same light spirit, "if we here in this household can set first class examples, at least *some* steps will have been taken, and after that we can only live in hope. Another thing we have to learn, I think, is that almost

one quarter of the life of woman is spent in making garments look fresh and beautiful, only to be soiled and wrinkled in a short while. As for myself, had I not discovered that such articles were obtainable on the market, I think I should have studied the manufacture of wearing materials that I might produce goods for both men and women that would stand all the washing, rubbing, soap and water that one might choose to give them, but would require none of the time, patience and strength to press into smoothness which is placed on the numerous pieces of clothing usually in our wardrobes."

"Don't think," she continued a little banteringly, "that I do not believe in the utmost cleanliness, or in that daintiness which is peculiarly feminine, but I have come to know that we can have both, yet can save three-fourths and more of the energy that is spent by others or ourselves on pieces of clothing which, specially is stiffly starched, make one decidedly uncomfortable, or announce the

coming of the wearer by much rustling. I think, however, that everything that is washable should, as nearly as possible, be made of material that will save the labor of hours in making perfectly smooth, only to be crumpled into innumerable wrinkles almost in a moment's use. Have your laces, have your ribbons full and plenty, but have everything plain and dainty, easy to put on and always attractive by its freshness and simplicity."

"Your scheme would put out of existence part, at least, of a certain means of livelihood to a number of people. However, since you give them plenty to do in the way of washing I presume they may hope not to starve," I said jestingly.

"I feel quite sure on that point," said Mrs. Marvin. "Here you will see how easily we manage it and how much comfort every one takes, and yet I think you will admit unhesitatingly that we are all satisfactory to behold and some even more. I should consider that quite a few of our ladies are very attractive. With

unanimous consent to have everything made as simple in style as possible, labor along the line of laundry work is considerably reduced. Among our friends here are some who have made this their business in life, as there are also others who have perfected themselves in entirely different lines, and with their knowledge and skill in management, constant study how to improve and make the work easier, together with the help of others, *that* part of our home life has its bright sides also. Extravagant and useless waste of fresh linen is avoided as much as possible. Therefore it is not uncommon to find Mrs. Mann, who has direct supervision of the laundry, ready to join any of us in our hours of discussion or practice of some new music. She has a most delightful alto voice which is enjoyed not only by those here, but by our many friends who chance to come in or are invited to anything special going on."

"Well," said I, "you certainly have the happy faculty of making every side

of life interesting, and what a satisfaction it must be."

We had long since finished eating and had been so engrossed in conversation that I came very near neglecting my new duties, and laughingly said I should receive a "black" mark for interrupting their clocklike precision. I quickly gathered those dishes together which were to be transported to the kitchen and then assisted in putting the room in order. Miss Delancey looked as if she had enjoyed the hour and commenced crocheting on the beautiful soft shawl she was making for one of the elder ladies, and then Mrs. Marvin went to her own chamber.

Not long after this quiet reigned supreme and I concluded that the restful hour, so much appreciated by all, had come and almost wished I could peep about to see the individual inclination of each one. I was a little curious to know how many there were who took the time for sleep. This, however, was out of the

question, so I contented myself by seeking a book and a corner in the library, there to think and read.

Much to my surprise, on looking at my watch later, I discovered that I too must have succumbed to the soothing influence about the home, for it was quite an hour and a half since I had sought my quiet nook. Through the open window near by came the sweet perfume of the flowers which lured me out to enjoy the fragrant air before night again cast its shadows around us. Having been given permission to investigate everything, I felt free to wander where I would and so started for the principal gardens. They covered quite a vast territory and besides flowers of all kinds, whose beauty and luxury were a joy to behold, I felt quite a strong admiration for the various vegetables which thrived and grew so well under the care and watchful eye of Mr. Whitehurst.

It was growing late, however, so it was hardly wise to go very far, and then it

occurred to me that I should find more of the household busy out here in the morning than at twilight, so concluding to make a visit some other time I sauntered toward the house. Supper had been prepared and, as on the evening before, we again had the pleasure of eating out of doors.

"Well," said a gentle voice behind me, which I recognized as Mrs. Chester's, "where have you been and how have you enjoyed yourself today?"

"Very delightfully, Mrs. Chester," I replied. "Every hour has been so full that they have seemed to fly by and I have been very happy."

"It is Saturday," Mrs. Chester said as we seated ourselves at one of the tables, "and I am glad that you chance to be here. We have very pleasant times on Saturday evenings and I hope you will enjoy this one. Tonight I believe there is an unusual list of attractions, if I may put it that way. You seem so keenly interested in electricity that perhaps you

will enjoy the meeting of the 'Magnets,' otherwise known as one branch of the club studying electricity. The other has taken the name 'Electrodes.' Of course as we have such a large amount of machinery here it is the one portion of our work that requires constant supervision. Consequently, there are groups on and off, and for safety and the best possible management it was necessary in this particular branch to hire an expert outright. But he, too, has fallen into the spirit which reigns and has an intelligent corps of able assistants who share with pleasure the responsibility, as well as the diversion which comes in their hours of leisure. It goes without saying that this part of our work runs very smoothly. But to return to the club. It is in two sections as I have said, which meet on alternate weeks. Both have interesting meetings and there is a pleasant rivalry between them. They often manage so that members of each can attend the meeting of the other section and we all

follow their studies and progress with much interest."

"Though decidedly uninformed on this subject," said I, "I am yet deeply interested in it and shall without doubt enjoy spending some time with them. But tell me, how do you all know what is going on?"

"Very easily," she replied. "There is placed on the bulletin boards for the benefit of all of us, programs of the various club meetings with their dates. If there is an agreement between the musical people to have something in that line, a statement is posted of that. Or, if a purely social hour is arranged for dancing or games, notice of that is given so that each person has a chance to follow his or her own taste."

"A dance is arranged for tonight," she continued, "and if you like that sort of pleasure you can possibly divide up your time so as to share in that also."

"I am quite feminine," I answered, as we arose from the table, "and enjoy as

much as the very youngest the witchery of rhythmic music, a smooth floor, and a partner whose perfect step makes the whole a most exquisite delight."

THE END

NOTE.—The author of this splendid piece of literary work calls to the attention of its readers the hope that here and there a thought may be culled which will serve as a working basis for one or another of its readers. In this case I feel that the careful reader will be benefited and this little book may go forth and be of use to the world.

Yours very truly,

JNO. W. THOMPSON.

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